

HomeSeer HS2

Getting Started Guide



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Welcome to HomeSeer!

This getting started guide is for use with the HS2 version of the HomeSeer software.

If you want to dive right into the software, please take a quick look at this quick start guide first.

HomeSeer is an advanced home automation package designed to take full advantage of the features available in your PC such as Internet access, E-mail, text-to-speech, and others. These features are typically not available in stand-alone controllers. The software was designed to be easy to use, yet flexible enough for advanced users.

HomeSeer works automatically by responding to events that you configure. For example, a motion detector causing a light to be turned on if it is dark is an example of an **event** that you might want to set up. The motion detector sending an ON signal is a **trigger**, whether or not it is dark is a **condition**, and turning on a light is an **action**. The motion detector itself is a **device** within HomeSeer. These terms will be referred to several times throughout this guide.

All things that happen automatically are because of an event. There are essentially two ways to ad-hoc control HomeSeer, and they are by voice or by the web interface. Voice recognition and the web interface are two ways that you can run a pre-defined set of actions (configured in an event) in response to control from the web page, or because of a phrase spoken that was configured to run an event.

HomeSeer is designed to work with a wide range of home automation devices. Support for new devices and other software packages is through the use of plug-ins and scripts. New plug-ins and scripts are constantly becoming available through HomeSeer Technologies, as well as third parties and end users. Check our support web page and our message board for the latest plug-ins that are available. Some plug-ins are purchased separately. Updates are also available from within HomeSeer, click on the Updates link or select Updates from the Help menu.

The software is designed to work with just about any X10 or Z-Wave compatible device, as well as other lighting and control systems.

At a minimum, you will need the following:

- An X-10 or Z-Wave Interface for your computer. The CM11A or TI103 connect to your PC's serial port, the SmartHome PowerLinc connects to a USB port on your computer, and HomeSeer's Z-Wave Interface connects to a USB port. There are many other X-10 interfaces and lighting systems supported by HomeSeer.
- Some X10 or Z-Wave plug in lamp modules
- Some X10 or Z-Wave plug in appliance modules
- If you are using Z-Wave, one master controller is needed (usually a handheld controller)

The easiest procedure for getting started with HomeSeer is to create devices in HomeSeer that represent the devices you want to control, and then to create some events to control those devices. As you become more familiar with HomeSeer, you may wish to explore more advanced automation topics, plug-ins, scripting, and much more.

Keeping HomeSeer Up-to-date

HomeSeer updates are continually released. These updates can be retrieved through the Updater within HomeSeer. When you install HomeSeer from this CD, please be sure to use the Updater to update to the most current version. The most current full version of HomeSeer can be downloaded and installed (without the CD) from:

<http://www.homeseer.com/downloads/index.htm>

HomeSeer Online Tutorials

To help the user become more oriented with HomeSeer, a multitude of "How-to" tutorials have been posted on HomeSeer's website. There, users can learn basic things such as adding a device to more complicated things such as scripting or configuring HomeSeer Phone. These tutorials can be found at:

<http://www.homeseer.com/support/tutorials.htm>

Some key information:

- HomeSeer has an auto save feature. Any changes you make to your configuration are saved immediately. There is no need to be concerned about losing data and no need to perform frequent saves. It may be wise to backup your configuration file periodically. Note that HomeSeer automatically creates a backup file of your configuration. Configuration files have the extension “.mdb”. All configuration information is stored in the “config” directory in the HomeSeer folder. HomeSeer settings for the program itself are stored in the file SETTINGS.INI which is also in your “config” directory.
- The current configuration file name is always displayed in the title bar of the main event log window.
- You can easily view all the events associated with a particular device. Simply click the check box next to the device, and scroll down to the bottom of the screen. Change the box to read “View event references for a device” and press ok in box that appears. You will then be taken to a page with all the events that use that device.
- HomeSeer has an automated update feature. To upgrade the application to the latest version, select Updates from the help menu in HomeSeer. The updater will also allow you to install special script packages, plug-ins, and other third party software such as the Napco security panel plug-in and the Windows Media Player plug-in.

Quick Start

This section is intended to get you started quickly using HomeSeer without reading the entire manual, although reading the manual is highly recommended. HomeSeer is loaded with features that may not be obvious by looking at the setup screens. This section is designed for users that are very familiar with software applications and have a general knowledge of home automation. **If you would like a more step-by-step approach to getting started, skip to the section titled “Running HomeSeer for the First Time”.**

Tell HomeSeer about your hardware.

Click the *Interfaces* tab in the HomeSeer options from the menu *Edit → Setup* or click on the *Setup* link on the main screen. Changes to your interfaces take place immediately and a restart of the application is not required.

Using the Speaker Application

In order to hear sounds or speech, or to use voice recognition, you must enable the Speaker Application. This program is a client application for HomeSeer that can be installed on any computer that is networked to your HomeSeer computer. The shortcut to run the Speaker application is on your desktop and your Windows Start menu. If you are connecting to your local machine, it will locate your running HomeSeer application and connect automatically. Connecting to HomeSeer from other computers can be easily done in the options tab.

Using the voice recognition

Enable the voice recognition by running a speaker application and pressing the "Start Listening" button. The computer will then start listening for attention. To get the computers attention, speak the attention phrase, which is *Computer* by default. When the computer acknowledges you, you may then speak a command. The event list will show all your events. The events that respond to voice commands have a "m", "p" or "b" next to their name. Create voice commands by entering the command phrase in the Voice Command text box in the properties of an event.

To control individual devices using your voice, check the box "Voice Command" in the properties for the device. You can then say "turn on/off the [device location name]", like "turn off the living room lights", or "living room lights off", or "living room lights fifty percent".

Remember to enable listening on the speaker client by pressing the *start listening* button. After some time, the Speaker application will automatically stop listening for commands and listen only for the attention word. This stops false triggering. The timeout is settable in the Speaker options. To manually force Speaker to stop listening, say the ignore phrase, which is *GoodBye* by default.

Devices and Events

To see all the events associated with a device, click the check box next to the device and then scroll to the bottom of the screen. There is a drop down box; select "View event references for device" and press ok in the dialog box that appears.

To organize your events, put them into different groups. Events may be assigned a group name. Give related events the same group name. This makes it easier to display related events. Groups may be displayed by selecting the proper group name from the drop down list in the events display.

Running HomeSeer for the first time

Step by step getting started instructions.

Connect any hardware devices that you would like to use with HomeSeer to your PC. Install any drivers that may be necessary for the device and follow the manufacturer's testing procedure to make sure the device is working properly. Double click the setup application and follow the prompts to install the software. If you have the CD version of HomeSeer, the HomeSeer installer will start when you insert your CD into your CD-ROM drive.

A HomeSeer folder is added to your start menu. A HomeSeer icon is added to this folder. Select Start then programs then HomeSeer, and then select the HomeSeer icon.

Registering HomeSeer

When HomeSeer is run for the first time, a page will appear asking the user to register the software. There are two possible ways to go about doing this:

1. **Online Unlock**

When a user purchases the software, they are given a *license ID* and *password* (if the Download version of HomeSeer is purchased, they will receive their codes via e mail; if a CD/Physical copy of the software is purchased, registration information will be supplied with the CD). These two pieces of registration information can both be used to register the software using the **ONLINE** option. If the user has an internet connection, all they must do is choose this option and input the information in the appropriate directory.

2. **Manual Unlock**

If the user does not have access to the internet they can register using the **MANUAL** unlock option. To do this, they need to click the Manual Unlock button, which will present them with two codes. These two codes, along with the user's License ID and password, must be given to HomeSeer Technologies. In return, HomeSeer Technologies will give the customer a third code which will correspond to all of the aforementioned. The user must then input this third code and the software will then unlock and be considered registered.

Setting up Sunrise and Sunset times

You can have HomeSeer calculate sunrise and sunset times for your location. These times are used in HomeSeer for determining dark (nighttime).

Select the *Setup* link on the HomeSeer main screen, then click the *Location* tab.

Select your location from the drop down list: click OK.

If your location is not listed, enter your longitude and latitude. If you do not know your longitude or latitude, you may also choose a location near you from the list of cities to get the same approximate sunrise and sunset values.

Click the Save button to save your settings and have the new sunrise/sunset times calculated. You can view the new times on the HomeSeer status bar at the top of the page.

Make sure that your PC's timezone is set properly as well - Windows installs using a default timezone that may not be correct for your location. The timezone is used in calculating sunrise and sunset. Double click on the clock in your system tray to set your timezone.

Views

The top pane is the Menu Bar. This bar contains buttons that allow you select what type of information you wish to display.

Device View

This is a list of all your devices with their current status (On, Off, Dim, Temperature, etc.).

The devices may be sorted by clicking the titles of any column.

You may also limit the view to a particular location. Just below the menu bar there is a drop down list of all your locations (or Rooms). Select a location from the list, such as Family Room. The list will now display devices that are in that room. Select All Locations to get a list of all your devices.

Events View

This view displays a list of all your configured events. .

See the Events section for more information on events. The view lists the following information:

- Name = the name of the event, with any of the following symbols after it:
 - M = the event is a voice command that can be triggered by microphone.
 - P = the event is a voice command that can be triggered by phone.
 - B = The event is a voice command that can be triggered by microphone or phone.
 - Red circle with a slash = the event is disabled and will not be triggered if its trigger conditions are met. These events can still be triggered by voice however.
- Trigger = the type of trigger for the event which will describe what must happen in order for the event to trigger
- Actions = Actions that will occur when the event is triggered. An action can be any of the following:
 - Events = other events that will run when this event triggers
 - Scripts = scripts that are executed when the event triggers

- I/R Command = the infrared commands that are sent when the event triggers
- Global X10 = housecode wide X10 commands that are executed when the event triggers
- Application = the application that is launched when the event triggers
- Sound = the sound that is played when the event triggers
- Speak = the phrase that is spoken when the event triggers (text to speech must be enabled)
- Many more actions are available

Here is a sample event view.

Events - All Groups

7/22/2005 15:51:25 Sunrise: 05:26 Sunset: 20:17 User: default HomeSeer

Status Events Log Control TV Timer Setup Threads Phone Updater Help Log Out

Add Event Sorted View Bottom

All Groups

Manual Time Dev Status Plug-In Recurring Condition Phone X-10 Email

Time Triggered

| Control | Name | Trigger | Action |
|------------------------------|---------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Run | Sunrise | 5:26 AM (0:0 hr/min after Sunrise) Everyday | Add Action Run script: startup.txt |

X10 Triggered

| Control | Name | Trigger | Action |
|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Run | L6 ON (M) | X10 Command L6 On Everyday | Add Action |

Conditional

| Control | Name | Trigger | Action |
|------------------------------|----------|-----------------------|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Run | UnNamed8 | Condition Everyday | Add Action |

Event Log

The event log is used to keep track of HomeSeer activity. It logs all event activity as well as device activity. If you are troubleshooting some events that do not seem to be working properly, the log is an invaluable tool for seeing what's going on. You can configure the log from the General tab in the options.

The log screen displays a history of what actions HomeSeer has performed. The following is logged:

- All X10 signals seen on the power line
- All Z-Wave signals transmitted

- All event triggers, no matter how they are triggered
- All logins to the built-in web server. The log includes the IP address of the host who logged in
- All device actions performed via the web interface
- All actions performed via the ActiveX (OLE) interface, this includes scripts.

Setting up the Insteon Plugin

The Insteon Plugin is a free and optional plugin that will allow HomeSeer to control Powerline devices through the use of an Insteon Powerline Interface (required). Using the HomeSeer Web configurator, install the latest Insteon Plugin. After the download is completed, you will be instructed to restart HomeSeer. Exit HomeSeer and plug the interface device to the computer and a proper power outlet if you have not already done so.

After restarting HomeSeer a Schedule dialog may appear to tell you that you are installing "beta" level software. Click "Yes" to continue. A second dialog will inform you that the SmartHome Device Manager (SDM) will be installed. Click "Ok" to continue. A final dialog will give you information as to where release information can be retrieved. The SDM installer will start. After completing the installation the Windows Firewall may prompt you to block or unblock the SmartHome Device Manager. Choose "unblock".

After HomeSeer starts go to the *Setup* tab in the HomeSeer Web configurator. Under the *Interfaces* tab, be sure to enable the Insteon plugin for the appropriate devices you will be using ("X10" for x10 devices, "Other" for SmartHome devices or other non-x10 power controlled devices). Click on *Insteon Configuration* to configure or add devices to HomeSeer.

Note: individual devices that are to be controlled by the Insteon Interface must be added from the Insteon Configuration page and cannot be added from HomeSeer's normal "add device" button.

Devices are added by clicking on *Manage Devices* from the Insteon Configuration page. Devices can be added manually or using the Tap-add capability of the device. When manually adding a device, device ID (located on the device you wish to control) must be supplied. A device name, location, and polling frequency can also be specified if desired. Press *Confirm Add Device* and follow the onscreen instructions to add the device. When Tap-adding a device, simply follow the instruction on screen which will tell you when to activate the device's tap-link function (see the device's own

documentation for details). After you have completed adding the devices, they can be controlled as any other device in HomeSeer.

System Requirements

HomeSeer supports Windows 7, Vista, XP and 2000. It may work on other operating systems but they are currently not supported. Internet Explorer is the recommended browser for the web interface.

If you would like to view your local mail, a MAPI compliant E-mail application should be installed, such as Outlook Express or Microsoft Outlook. With a POP/SMTP E-mail account, it is still possible to have HomeSeer send E-mail messages and respond to E-mail sent to it - but it will not display the built-in E-mail page.

You will need an Internet account to access your system via the Web.

HomeSeer must be running in order for it to control your devices or to answer your phone and give you voice control via the telephone.

If you intend on using voice recognition, you should have a Pentium processor running at 400 mhz or faster. You also need a good quality microphone for the best recognition accuracy.

Technical Support

Support is available many different ways. Please visit our support page on our website for more information.

We also have a message board available on our web site. From the message board you can view questions and answers other users have asked and you can post your questions where others may benefit from the answers. The message board is available at: <http://www.HomeSeer.com> (click on the support link at the top of the page).

Support requests and Feature Requests may also be entered at the Helpdesk, which can be found at the support page listed above.

The Helpdesk page referenced above also has links to on-line versions of help files for HomeSeer products, and a link to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) database where you can search and view popular questions asked by other HomeSeer users.

Product updates are available from within HomeSeer. Select Updates from the Help menu to get the latest version of the software as well as scripts, plug-ins, and other third party software.

Our development process is very open. As new features are added to the software, updates will be available via the HomeSeer updater, including Beta versions. Keep in mind that Beta versions of the software may not be as stable as the released version.